

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in this patent application.

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1-3 (Canceled).

Claim 4 (Currently Amended): A dielectric recording/reproducing head for a dielectric recording medium, comprising:

a recording/reproducing electrode for recording information or data in the dielectric recording medium or reproducing information or data recorded in the dielectric recording medium; and

a slider placed on the surrounding of the recording/reproducing electrode and having a surface facing to the dielectric recording medium,

wherein the slider comprises a conductive member and functions as a return electrode for returning an electric field applied from the recording/reproducing electrode to the dielectric recording medium.

Claim 5 (Original): The dielectric recording/reproducing head according to claim 4, wherein the recording/reproducing electrode has a cantilever shape.

Claim 6 (Canceled).

Claim 7 (Currently Amended): The dielectric recording/reproducing head according to claim 4, wherein the slider comprises ~~contains~~ an insulating member and the conductive member comprises ~~[[has]]~~ a conductive film on the surface of the slider facing to the dielectric recording medium, ~~and the conductive film has a function of a return electrode for~~

~~returning an electric field applied from the recording/reproducing electrode to the dielectric recording medium.~~

Claim 8 (Original): The dielectric recording/reproducing head according to claim 4, wherein an end portion of the slider located against a direction in which the dielectric recording medium relatively moves has a curved or sloping surface with respect to a surface of the dielectric recording medium.

Claim 9 (Original): The dielectric recording/reproducing head according to claim 4, wherein a tip portion of the recording/reproducing electrode is located not to project from the surface of the slider facing to the dielectric recording medium.

Claim 10 (Canceled).

Claim 11 (Currently Amended): The dielectric recording/reproducing head according to claim 4 [[10]], wherein a [[the]] tip portion of the recording/reproducing electrode has a [[the]] first width in a longitudinal direction and a second width in a cross direction, and the first width is larger than the second width.

Claim 12 (Currently Amended): The dielectric recording/reproducing head according to claim 4 [[10]], wherein a [[the]] shape of a [[the]] cross-section of a [[the]] tip portion of the recording/reproducing electrode is an ellipse ~~or rectangle~~.

Claim 13 (Original): The dielectric recording/reproducing head according to claim 4, comprising a first tracking signal detection electrode for detecting a tracking signal.

Claim 14 (Original): The dielectric recording/reproducing head according to claim 13, wherein the first tracking signal detection electrode is placed in front of or behind the recording/reproducing electrode, deviating by half a track pitch in one direction along a track width direction.

Claim 15 (Original): The dielectric recording/reproducing head according to claim 14, comprising a second tracking signal detection electrode for detecting a tracking signal, wherein the second tracking signal detection electrode is placed in front of or behind the recording/reproducing electrode, deviating by half a track pitch in the opposite direction to said one direction.

Claim 16 (Original): The dielectric recording/reproducing head according to claim 4, wherein an insulator is placed between the slider and the recording/reproducing electrode.

Claim 17 (Original): The dielectric recording/reproducing head according to claim 16, wherein the recording/reproducing electrode is held by the insulator in the inside of the slider, so that the position of the recording/reproducing electrode is fixed.

Claim 18 (Original): The dielectric recording/reproducing head according to claim 17, wherein the insulator is a molding member for holding the recording/reproducing electrode in the inside of the slider.

Claims 19-24 (Canceled).

Claim 25 (New): The dielectric recording/reproducing head according to claim 4, wherein a shape of a cross-section of a tip portion of the recording/reproducing electrode is an ellipse.

Claim 26 (New): An apparatus comprising the dielectric recording/reproducing head according to claim 4.

Claim 27 (New): A dielectric head for a dielectric recording medium, comprising: an electrode for applying an electric field to the dielectric recording medium; and

a slider surrounding the electrode and including a surface facing the dielectric recording medium,

wherein the slider comprises a grounded conductive member.

Claim 28 (New): The dielectric head according to claim 27, wherein the conductive member comprises a conductive film on the surface of the slider facing the dielectric recording medium.

Claim 29 (New): An information recording apparatus comprising the dielectric head according to claim 27.

Claim 30 (New): An information reproducing apparatus comprising the dielectric head according to claim 27.